

**NEWINGTON PARKS & RECREATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
TUESDAY, September 20, 2016**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Beth Manke called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

II. ROLL CALL

Board Members Present: Beth Manke, Eileen Francolino, Mary Udice, Bill DeBlasio, Jen Crowley, Ed Marchion, Mary Beth Kelliher, James Cultrera, Don Woods

Board Members Absent: Sue Reniewicz

Staff Present: Superintendent William DeMaio

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF July 19, 2016

Eileen Francolino made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 19, 2016 meeting. Mary Udice seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 9-0 vote.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None

V. CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS/REPORTS

From the Superintendent, Bill DeMaio:

Newington Emergency Medical Services - received a thank you note from Frank DeMaio for all the improvements done to the outside of the building over the past year by the town crews.

Mr. B Rooney - recognized Parks and Recreation crew with a thank you note. He was very happy to get the mulch for the circle and some trees trimmed.

Mrs. Anna Leon - Superintendent DeMaio received an email regarding the Little Brook Basketball Court which is further discussed in New Business.

VI. SUMMARY REPORT

Monthly Report - July & August 2016

Eileen Francolino asked Superintendent DeMaio if there was an enrollment increase since the St. Mary's preschool closing. Superintendent DeMaio responded that the preschool program was pretty full, most of the St. Mary's preschool attendants were looking for a later start time.

Tree Warden Report

The cherry picker was in the shop for repairs for the past three weeks, just getting to all the tree complaints this week.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

Golf Fund Authorization

Finance Director, Ann Harter suggested the Board Members of Parks and Recreation approve the Parks and Recreation Department spending of money from the Golf Fund. The fund was put in place for Capital Improvements for the department. Ann has made a list of items purchased in the past for the Board to approve. Lisa Delude, Secretary, has made a list of items to be purchased this September. Superintendent DeMaio would like an approval of the concept having the Board members approve the spending of the money from the Golf Fund. The Golf Fund currently has a \$55,883.00 balance.

Motion: A motion was made by Don Woods to authorize a policy that this Board of Parks and Recreation will approve all expenditures from the Golf Fund. Beth Manke seconded the motion; all were in favor with a 9-0 vote.

Motion: A motion was made by Don Woods for the Board of Parks and Recreation to approve the expenditures on prior purchases as well as current purchases for of the month of September and future use of the proceeds from the past annual golf tournaments. Bill DeBlasio seconded the motion; all were in favor with a 9-0 vote.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Outdoor Exercise Equipment Grant:

Superintendent DeMaio has applied for a \$25,000 Saputo Healthy Lifestyle Legacy Grant for the purchase and installation of outdoor equipment. Superintendent DeMaio got the OK from the Town Council to submit this grant. The outdoor equipment is state of the art, used by NASA, with a lifetime of 20 years, no maintenance. The outdoor work out equipment will give parents the opportunity to work out while their children are taking swim lessons. Anyone can come here and use the equipment 24/7. Superintendent DeMaio will hear about the status of the grant by mid-October. Installation would have to be completed by early spring. Equipment that is there now is breaking down and needs to be repaired often.

Duplications of Programs:

The Library is duplicating a lot of the same programs for free which are also offered by the Parks and Recreation Department. In recent years, the library has taken over the bus trips which in the past the Parks and Recreation Department has offered. Parks and Recreation offers programs as a break even, make money business without the use of tax dollars to pay for the recreation division. The Library uses tax dollars to pay for their programs therefore giving them the ability to offer them for free to the public. Superintendent DeMaio received some letters from the public regarding this issue. Over the summer the Library hired Healthtrax instructors to teach similar classes offered by Parks and Recreation. Superintendent DeMaio spoke with Lisa Masten, Library Director about this issue and Superintendent DeMaio would have liked if Lisa asked to use some of the Parks and Recreation instructors to teach the Library classes which would possibly encourage the public to participate in the Parks and Recreation classes in the future. Also, the Newington Lucy Wells Library was tweeting and promoting preschool programs and adult fitness classes for West Hartford Parks and Recreation. Superintendent DeMaio does not understand the promotion of other towns programs and would like to curb the competition with programs and work together with the Library. Superintendent DeMaio has given the Library a bulletin of the programs offered by the Parks and Recreation over the past year and asked if they could try and offer something different than what is offered through the Parks and Recreation Department.

Beth Manke mentioned that it would be a great partnership to work with the Library. She also asked about the tweets promoting West Hartford.

Superintendent DeMaio responded that Lisa Masten would speak to the person in charge of tweets and ask them not to do that anymore.

Eileen Francolino mentioned that twitter was new to the Library and she had brought the promoting of West Hartford tweets to the Councils attention twice during budget season. She also mentioned that we need to work together as a community.

Don Woods mentioned that Healthtrax offered their services for free to the Library. He also mentioned that it seems like the Library is willing to try to not collide with our programs. Don suggested requesting future copies of their programs to see if there were conflicts with the Parks and Recreation programs before it was published.

Motion: A motion was made by Don Woods to have the Director respectfully request to share programs with the Board of Parks and Recreation before they go to print for review. Eileen Francolino seconded the motion; all were in favor with a 9-0 vote.

The Board wishes to continue this on next month's agenda for further review.

Softball League:

In light of the vulgar emails and letters sent by members of the softball league to the staff of the Parks and Recreation Department, Superintendent DeMaio will continue to do the field maintenance and charge the complete fees for the lights, charge half price for the field rental for the first year and full price for the second year and years thereafter. Superintendent DeMaio will go by the existing rule for residency requirements for all players on the roster.

Don Woods mentioned that players, aside from being residents, can also be NHS graduates and/or own a business in town and be able to play on the team.

Motion: A motion was made by Eileen Francolino that the Newington Men's Softball League be allowed to administer the 2017 season on their own, they will be required to pay for the use of lights and field rental charges. Field fees will be negotiated by the Superintendent, not to be less than half the cost based on the number of games requested to be played this seasons and go up to full rate on the seconded season and thereafter. Don Woods seconded the motion; all were in favor with a 9-0 vote.

Little Brook Park Basketball Courts:

Mr and Mrs. Leon moved into the house next door to the Little Brook Park basketball court about a year and a half ago and has recently approached Superintendent DeMaio asking to change the court into something else because of noise and inappropriate language use while on the court. Mrs. Leon suggested something quieter like 4 square. When the couple moved into the house the real estate agent naturally told them that no one uses the basketball court. They have come to Superintendent DeMaio looking for a solution to the noise that is like Chinese Torture to them. Superintendent DeMaio has brought this to the Boards attention; Don Woods suggested a sign at the basketball court to show courtesy for the neighbors close to the park and a garbage can to help with the liter problem. Don Woods also suggested to Superintendent DeMaio to send a letter to Mr. and Mrs. Leon stating that the Board has given this great consideration and understands their concerns. However, athletic areas are in limited supply in town and the basketball court is being utilized as such intended. If it is not being used properly the homeowners should notify the police department.

IX. Reports

Sensory Garden

Ed Beacon very happy with the way the garden looks, Carly McCarthy is up for Gold Star in Girl Scouts. Superintendent DeMaio will be installing irrigation to the garden. The cost is approximately

\$1,800.00 and Mr. Ed Beacon is willing to donate something towards the irrigation. Don Woods mentioned that the garden needs to be maintained bi-weekly during the growing season. The garden looks beautiful.

Camp S'more

New program this year, parents asked for an extra week of summer camp because of the school year ending earlier this year. It turned out to be a very successful program with 65 kids attending. They made S'mores on the first day near Mill Pond which made the front page of the Town Crier. The kids went on a few trips during the week. This program will continue next year.

Extravaganza Update

The Extravaganza was very successful this year. Superintendent DeMaio was so appreciative of the Board Members for all of their help volunteering during the week. Great negotiations with the stage companies. Superintendent DeMaio saved a lot of money this year and also added a ton of services. The department made over \$20,000 more than last year but spent approximately \$11,000 more on fireworks for a great fireworks show. The Extravaganza was a big hit this year. Superintendent DeMaio is buying 20 professional donation boxes to leave in businesses around town. Jay LaPierre, CIT for Newington Summer Camps raised about \$100 for the fireworks during the Extravaganza.

One more thing

- October Meeting will be held in the Teen Center
- After school program is going great. 83 kids are enrolled in this program. Anna Reynolds and Ruth Chaffee have most of the kids enrolled in the program. The principal at Anna Reynolds really promoted the program at this school. Open enrollment is still going on, Superintendent DeMaio will send out another email to promote that there is space available for this program.
- Soccer opening day was last Saturday. Superintendent DeMaio gave a short speech, it was held at the High School and there was a little parade, about 500 kids were there.
- Waterfall Festival had a good turnout.
- Motorcycle Run also successful event.
- Cherish the Children another good event that happened this month.
- Eileen asked about the Churchhill Park Renovation Project. Superintendent DeMaio said it is on standby for now. Don Woods mentioned to Superintendent DeMaio to call Rick Lopes to find out more information about a 20 million dollar fund for community centers. Don Woods will be calling Rick Lopes about the fund.

X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: NONE

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: A motion was made by Mary Udice to adjourn. Mary Beth Kelliher seconded the motion, all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:21 pm with a 9-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Jay